

ABSTRACT

Modified hairpin-forming oligonucleotide to continuously assess nucleotide cleavage by enediynes and other nucleic acid cleavage agents are provided. These oligonucleotide probes, which are also referred to herein as "molecular break lights," are also useful for continuous assessment of protection of nucleotides from cleavage agents. Probes according to the present invention are useful in assays; improved assays, including multiplexed assays, utilizing such pairs of molecules or moieties; and assay kits that include such pairs. Methods of using the probes are also provided.